

In closing, even if placed in the best families, foster children often face the possibility that they will have to change homes, and as a result they must find a safe place of their own where they can become accepted and gain a sense of stability. Although for many foster children school can be such a place, the cases of many others show that under the current system, this is not always possible. I hope my family's experiences highlight the special challenges facing foster children as well as the need for an examination of whether limiting their educational options is truly in their best interests. I thank the Subcommittee for holding this hearing, and I thank you, Mr. Chairman, Congressman Weller, and Subcommittee members for the opportunity to share our story today.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BRUCE L. BRALEY

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 28, 2007

Mr. BRALEY of Iowa. Madam Speaker, on rollcall 564, the Brown-Waite of Florida Amendment, I was not present. If I had been there, I would have voted "no."

On rollcall 565, the Campbell of California Amendment No. 51, I was not present. If I had been there, I would have voted "no."

UNITED STATES-KOREA FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

HON. DAN BURTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 28, 2007

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Madam Speaker, this House recently approved H. Res. 295, sponsored by my good friend and colleague from New York, Rep. PETER KING, as well as 35 other Members from both sides of the aisle, to recognize the strong alliance between the Republic of Korea and the United States and to express the House of Representatives' appreciation to the Republic of Korea for its contributions to international efforts to combat terrorism. This resolution properly acknowledged the longstanding and heartfelt friendship between our two great countries.

This coming Saturday, June 30, 2007, marks the 125th anniversary of the Korean-American Treaty of Amity and Commerce, which was signed in 1882, and the 50th anniversary of the Treaty of Friendship, Commerce, and Navigation between the Republic of Korea and the United States, which was ratified in 1957.

Saturday June 30th will also mark another historic milestone in the ever growing relationship between the people of the United States and the people of the Republic of Korea when, in a ceremony to be held right here on Capitol Hill, representatives of both governments are expected to sign the United States-Korea Free Trade Agreement.

The proposed Free Trade Agreement—which still requires Congressional approval before coming into force—is a natural extension of the strong affinity between our two countries, marked by extraordinary diplomatic, political, military, and economic cooperation. Al-

though the devil is always in the details, I understand that this agreement could potentially be the most commercially significant free trade agreement signed by the United States in more than a decade. As many of my colleagues already know, South Korea is already the United States' seventh largest export market and sixth largest market for U.S. agricultural products. In fact, according to the latest statistics, our annual bilateral trade totals nearly \$80 billion. Any agreement that can open up more Korean markets to U.S. goods and services can only have a positive effect on the American economy by creating more and better jobs, enriching consumer choice, and boosting U.S. industry and manufacturing.

But there's more at stake here than just economic growth; this FTA recognizes our special relationship with South Korea and reinforces the message that the United States stands squarely behind our friends and allies. I would ask my colleagues to consider just a couple of points:

South Korea is the fifth largest tourism generating country to the United States (with over 800,000 Koreans visiting the U.S. annually);

South Korea has the largest foreign student population in the U.S.;

Nearly 2 million Americans of Korean descent live in communities all across our nation—which is why I support giving serious consideration to South Korea's entry into the Visa Waiver Program;

South Korea is a strong, unwavering ally in the U.S.-led Global War on Terror, having dispatched troops to Iraq (the third largest contingent after the United States and Great Britain), and Afghanistan (where a South Korean soldier was killed during hostile action), and to Lebanon in support of peacekeeping operations; and,

South Korea is a key partner in the Six-Party Talks to resolve North Korea's nuclear issue.

Madam Speaker, I believe that South Korea may be the premier success story of U.S. foreign policy in the post-World War II period. Having assisted South Korea in transforming itself from a war-torn, impoverished economy into a successful democracy with a free enterprise economy (the world's 11th largest), South Korea is now an indispensable partner with the United States in promoting democracy and free market economic principles.

The anticipated ceremony marking the conclusion of negotiations toward a U.S.-Korea Free Trade Agreement will be another opportunity to celebrate and honor the 125 years of friendship and cooperation between the Republic of Korea and the United States. Whether you're for free trade agreements or against them, I ask all my colleagues to join me in recognizing the historic significance of the U.S.-Korea alliance and its growing importance in the years to come.

STATEMENT AGAINST CONGRESSIONAL PAY INCREASE

HON. JERRY MORAN

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 28, 2007

Mr. MORAN of Kansas. Madam Speaker, I rise to oppose the current system of administering pay increases for Members of Con-

gress. Since I was first elected by Kansans to represent them in our Nation's capital, I have opposed the hidden process by which Members of Congress receive an annual pay raise.

Right now, the House Agriculture Committee is reauthorizing the farm bill. For Kansans and rural citizens across the country, this is perhaps the most significant piece of legislation Congress will consider this year. Unfortunately, the Democrat-crafted budget does not include enough funding to meet the needs of our Nation's agricultural producers, fulfill the environmental and conservation needs of our country and carry out food stamp and nutrition programs. Congress has been irresponsible with taxpayer dollars for too long and the limitless spending is catching up with us. Vital legislation, like the farm bill, that supports millions of Americans does not have the money available to it to meet the needs of our country.

Members of Congress should not receive a pay increase when the federal budget is this tight. Congress needs to follow the lead of American families and cut out spending that is unnecessary. We should begin today by cutting out the automatic pay raise for Members of Congress.

TO COMMEMORATE CHANGE OF COMMAND, COAST GUARD STA- TION, HOUSTON, TEXAS

HON. NICK LAMPSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 28, 2007

Mr. LAMPSON. Madam Speaker, I would like to take the opportunity today to commemorate the Change of Command at the Coast Guard Air Station located at Houston's Ellington Field. Captain Norman S. Schweizer was relieved of his command by Commander Sean M. Mahoney on Monday, June 25, 2007.

Captain Schweizer was born and raised in Miami, FL, and graduated from Florida State University in 1984, earning a bachelor of science degree in accounting. Following Officer Candidate School in 1984, his first assignment was as the Assistant Operations Officer at Group Key West, FL. After 20 years of service, Captain Schweizer assumed the duties of Commanding Officer of the Coast Guard Air Station in Houston, TX. His accomplishments include two Meritorious Service Medals, four Coast Guard Commendation Medals, two Coast Guard Achievement Medals, and the Commandant's Letter of Commendation.

The Air Station's new commander, Sean M. Mahoney, is a native of Fishkill, NY, and a graduate of the U.S. Coast Guard Academy where he received a bachelor of science degree in government. His first assignment was as a Deck Watch Officer aboard the *USCGC Morgenthau* in Alameda, CA. Due to honorable service, his decorations include the Air Medal, Coast Guard Commendation Medal, Commandant's Letter of Commendation, and two National Defense Service Medals. He is also a recipient of the Air Force Association of Canada's Air Search and Rescue Award.

Captain Schweizer has played an integral role in leading Air Station Houston in its service to a wide range of Coast Guard missions including search and rescue, homeland security missions, environmental protection, and

maritime law enforcement cases. Over the past 2 years alone, Air Station personnel flew over 4,445 flight hours. "Always Ready" flight crews supported nearly 1,000 hours in support of President Bush, homeland security patrols, and military escorts. Houston's personnel responded to over 300 search and rescue cases, saving or assisting nearly 1,100 lives, including an outstanding effort to rescue 890 individuals following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

Again, I am privileged to recognize Captain Norman S. Schweizer, Commander Sean M. Mahoney, and Air Station Houston for outstanding service to our country.

TRIBUTE TO THE BLUE NOTES DRUM AND BUGLE CORPS

HON. BART STUPAK

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 28, 2007

Mr. STUPAK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a musical group from my district that, for the past 50 years, has traveled Michigan's Upper Peninsula, U.P., entertaining crowds with traditional drum and bugle corps music. The Blue Notes Drum and Bugle Corps began in Ishpeming, MI, on Halloween night in 1957 as an all-boy junior corps. Founded by two dedicated young men, Joe Mayrand and Jim Medlyn, the Blue Notes and Drum Bugle Corps performed in local parades for the first time in the summer of 1958.

In 1959, the Blue Notes Drum and Bugle Corps was expanded and an all-girl color guard was added, under the direction of Mary Blight. In 1960, women were accepted into the Blue Notes horn line for the first time.

Over the next few years, with strong support of hard working parents and the entire Ishpeming community, along with sponsorship by the American Legion Post 58, money was raised to purchase new uniforms and instruments. With a proud community behind them, the Blue Notes soon grew into a competitive drum and bugle corps, well known throughout the Midwest.

During their 20-year existence as a competitive junior drum and bugle corps, the Blue Notes won numerous titles, including 9 State championships. The Corps participated in contests across the Midwest and Canada. Sadly, despite their successes, interest in the Corps dwindled and, in 1977, the junior corps disbanded. Drum and bugle corps music was absent from the Ishpeming area for the next 7 years.

However, in 1984, a group of junior corps alumni, then in their twenties and thirties, came together to consider reviving the corps. After discussions and practice, the group gathered and marched through the July 4th parade in Ishpeming, to honor the high school's 100-year reunion celebration.

The alumni corps' performance electrified the crowd. Having received such a tremendous reception, the alumni group decided to officially reunite and, since then, the revived Blue Notes Drum and Bugle Corps have been performing every year since.

The revived Corps expanded its membership to include not only Blue Notes alumni, but

other drum corps alumni and, any musicians interested in sharing their talents. Today, the Blue Notes Drum and Bugle Corps has members from across Michigan's western U.P., including the communities of Ishpeming, Negaunee, Marquette, Gladstone, Gwinn, Ontonagon, Kingsford, Iron Mountain, and even Hurley, WI.

The Blue Notes Drum and Bugle Corps' membership level has fluctuated throughout the years. While having only 8 members in 1984, the Corps boasted 54 members in 1999. Due to these changes in membership, members of the Corps came to realize that the group's continued existence would require a strong recruiting drive. A committee was formed to concentrate on recruiting new members. They targeted younger musicians, those aged 18 to 21, in order to ensure the Corps would remain vibrant even after its older members leave the group.

The recruiting committee's efforts successfully brought several younger members into the group. After seeing the enthusiasm these young people brought to the drum and bugle corps activity, the Blue Notes Drum and Bugle Corps extended membership to high school students.

Today, the 2007 Blue Notes "50th Anniversary Corps" has members ranging in age from 14 to 60. They come from all walks of life, but are united by a passion for drum and bugle corps music. Marquette County's only drum and bugle corps, and one of two active drum and bugle corps in the Upper Peninsula, the Blue Notes Drum and Bugle Corps are the pride of Ishpeming. Every summer, they conduct 20 performances across Michigan's Upper Peninsula, participating in parades, playing at community celebrations and keeping the drum and bugle tradition alive throughout the U.P.

Madam Speaker, the Blue Notes Drum and Bugle Corps' stalwart members, who revived the group after the junior corps disbanded in 1977 and their current members, should be commended for their dedication. This month, the Blue Notes Drum and Bugle Corps celebrates its 50 year anniversary. As the Ishpeming community and Michigan's U.P. honor the Blue Notes Drum and Bugle Corps I would ask that you, Madam Speaker, and the entire U.S. House of Representatives join me in saluting them, congratulating them on 50 musical years and wishing them many more years of spreading drum and bugle music throughout our Upper Peninsula.

SALUTING FRED RASCHKE: GALVESTON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE'S BUSINESS LEADER OF THE YEAR

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 28, 2007

Mr. PAUL. Madam Speaker, the Galveston Chamber of Commerce has chosen Mr. Fred Raschke as its Business Leader of the Year because, as Galveston Chamber of Commerce President Gina Spagnola said, "Fred is an extraordinary man who is committed to his family, his faith, his friends as well as service to our community."

Mr. Raschke is an honors graduate of the University of Texas and a graduate of Texas Tech University School of Law. He is a partner of the Mills Shirley law firm and a member of numerous legal organizations including the Fifth Federal Circuit and American Bar Association, the State Bar of Texas, and the Texas Association of Defense Counsels. His legal practice areas include defense litigation, negligence defense, personal injury defense, toxic tort defense, premises liability, gas, and electric utilities.

In addition to his professional accomplishments, Mr. Raschke's commitment to community service has made him a partner with all the people of Galveston. Mr. Raschke is very involved with several different community organizations including the Salvation Army, Boy Scouts of America, the Galveston Chamber of Commerce and the Galveston Historical Society. He has also served on boards of various Galveston area organizations, including the UTMB School of Nursing Alumni, Development and Community Relations Advisory Council, the Galveston County Economic Alliance, and the Galveston Rotary Club.

Madam Speaker, I am pleased to take this opportunity to join my friends at the Galveston County Chamber of Commerce in saluting Fred Raschke for both his professional accomplishments and his dedication to the Galveston community.

FINANCIAL SERVICES AND GENERAL GOVERNMENT APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2008

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN J. HALL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 27, 2007

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2829) making appropriations for financial services and general government for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, and for other purposes:

Mr. HALL of New York. Mr. Chairman, I am a committed advocate for small businesses, which are a driving force in the economy of the Hudson Valley. To help support these businesses, I cosponsored the Small Business Tax Relief Act, which provided a number of tax breaks to local small businesses including enhancement of the work opportunity tax credit and the ability to claim the work opportunity tax credit against AMT liability. I was proud to see the President sign that small business tax relief package into law earlier this year. The bill we considered today, the Financial Services and General Government Appropriations Bill, included over \$580 million for the Small Business Administration. Small businesses are a vital part of the 19th district of New York and the country as a whole, and I am committed to helping small business owners succeed in the 21st century and beyond.

During consideration of the Financial Services and General Government Appropriations Bill I voted against an amendment proposed by Congressman GARRETT that would have extended a moratorium on enforcement of